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Spice & Wolf

Vol. 7

PARENTAL ADVISORY
WARNING
EXPLICIT CONTENT

SPICE & WOLF

Lawrence

A merchant traveling with Holo. Heading north in search of Holo's homeland.

Holo

Lawrence's traveling companion, a beautiful girl. Her true form is that of the wolf-god of the harvest.

Elsa

A girl in the employ of the priest of the Church in Tereo. In love with Evan.

Evan

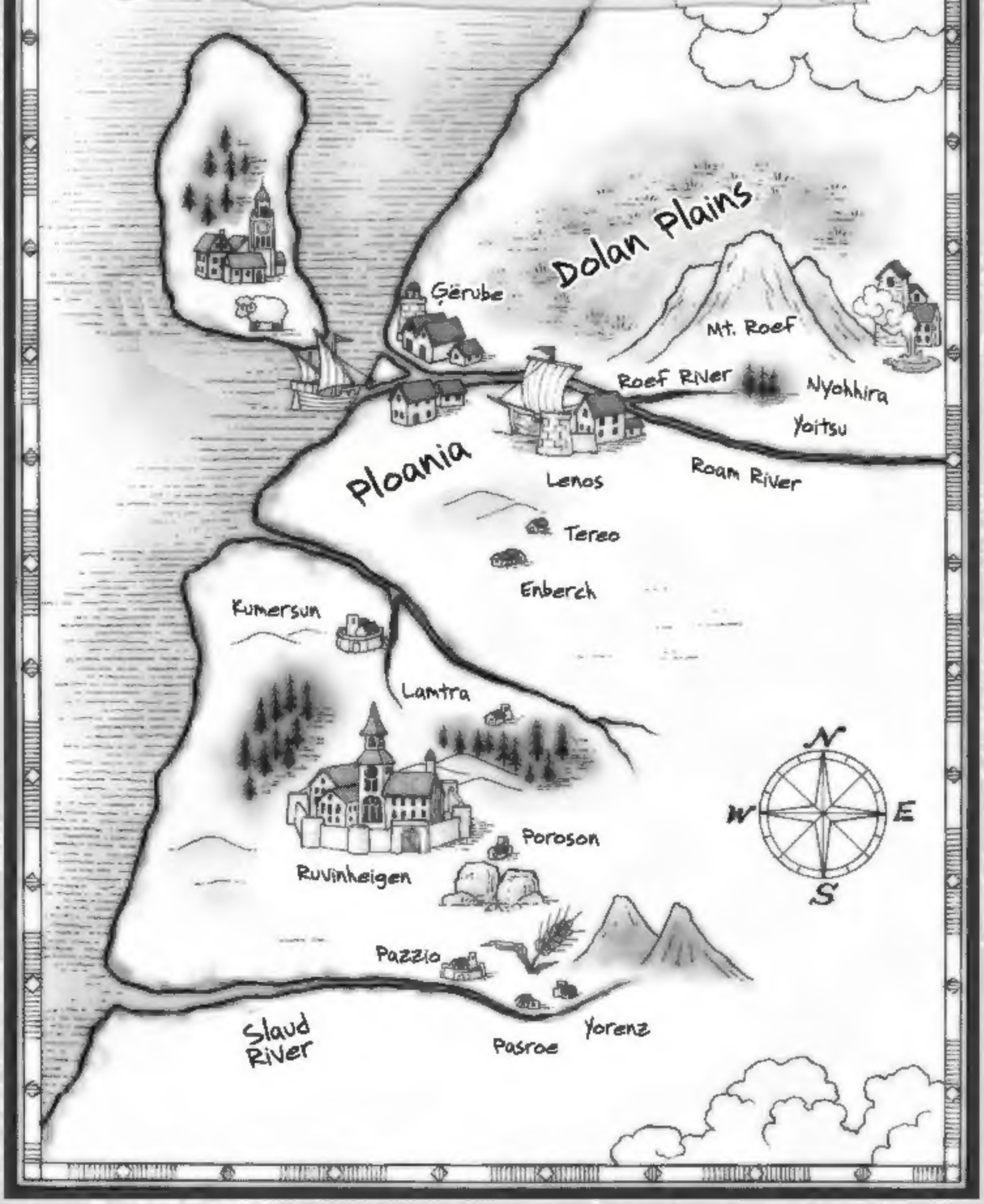
A young miller. Entranced by the world outside his village—including merchants.

Bishop Van

The bishop of St. Rio's Church in the town of Enberch. Conspiring with the town to control Tereo.

Introduction

Seeking clues to lead them to Holo's homeland, Lawrence and Holo journey northward. Having heard that the church priest in Tereo knows the whereabouts of a monk who specializes in pagan gods, the two head for the rural village. There, however, they're greeted at the church by a stern girl named Elsa…



Map illustration: Hidetada Idemitsu

SPICE & WOLF

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GOTO
ゴト
GOTO
(RATTLE)
ゴト
I CANNOT BUT MUSE THAT I AM ON THE LOSING END OF THIS BARGAIN, 'TIS TRUE.
LOOK, I SAID I WAS SORRY.
プン
PLIN
(PLIME)
プン
PLIN

prologue

GOTO (RATTLE)

I HELP EASE NIGHT'S CHILL AS I CAN...

...AND I'M EVEN GENEROUS ENOUGH NOT TO CHARGE YOU FOR THE FAVOR.

GOTO

OH AYE, IF IT'S A QUESTION OF WHO IS IN THE WRONG AND WHO SHOULD BE APOLOGIZING, 'TIS YOU AND SURE ENOUGH.

...THIS TAIL IS MY PRIDE! THE ONLY PROOF THAT I AM ME.

HOW-EVER...

!?

キャあああAH!あ

IT WAS THE FIRST TIME HE'D HEARD HER YELP SO. AND HE CONTINUED TO HEAR ABOUT IT.

OWING TO THE COLD, LAWRENCE HAD UNCONSCIOUSLY NESTLED HIS FEET ON HOLO'S FURRY TAIL. WORSE YET, WHEN HE'D TURNED OVER IN HIS SLEEP, HE'D CAUGHT HER FUR.

HAAH.

GOTO

BUTSU (GRUMBLE)

YOU'RE JUST SO BIG AND CLUMSY—

BUTSU

GOTO

BUTSU

SHALL WE EAT?

I TIRE OF THIS TOUGH RYE BREAD.

HAAH...

I WISH TO EAT SWEET BREAD ONCE IN A WHILE. AND BY SWEET BREAD, I MEAN, YOU KNOW, WHEAT BREAD.

I NEVER WOULD'VE IMAGINED WE'D BE UNABLE TO SELL WHEAT IN A TOWN LIKE ENBERCH.

LUXURIES LIKE THAT WILL HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL WE SELL SOME OF THIS OFF IN THE VILLAGE.

HYOI (PLUCK)

FUU (SIGH)

CAN WE NOT MAKE BREAD OF THIS...?

AH...

PU (POP)

GYUUUUU (GROOOW)

I DID NOT REALLY MEAN TO DO THAT.

...SURPRISED, ARE YOU?

NO PLAYING WITH THE MERCHAN-DISE!

PISHI (FLICK)

OW, OW, OW...

NORMALLY THEY QUAKE IN FEAR AT SUCH SIGHTS.

WELL, I'M A MERCHANT.

MY GOODS ARE AS PRECIOUS TO ME AS MY LIFE.

BASA (FWISH)

BASA

SOON THE TWO WOULD NEED TO MIND HOLO'S TAIL VERY CAREFULLY INDEED.

WELL, THEN!

MY TAIL IS QUITE THE SAME! YOU'D DO WELL TO REMEMBER IT!

BASA (FWISH)

OH, BROTHER...

HEE HEE HEE!

SPICE & WOLF

SPICE & WOLF

FATHER FRANZ WAS A GREAT MAN.

EVEN WE OF THE CHURCH IN ENBERCH MOURN HIM.

YES, FATHER ...

ELSA SCHTING-HEIM.

GUI (GRAB)

!

KARAAAN

KARAAAN (DONG)

IT WILL BE DIFFICULT FOR YOU TO CONTINUE ADMINISTERING AS YOU HAVE THUS FAR.

ELSA SCHTINGHEIM, YOU ARE A DEACONESS. AND THIS CHURCH HAS NO HOLY ARTIFACTS.

THUS ...

...OUR CHURCH HAS PREPARED TO DISPATCH AN APPROPRIATE INDIVIDUAL.

BISHOP VAN, MAY I SPEAK?

I'M SORRY FOR THE BLUNTNESS, ELSA...

GASA (SHPP)

IN SUCH A CASE, THE CONTRACT BETWEEN ENBERCH AND WE OF TEREO APPLIES AS FOLLOWS.

TO CONFIRM THAT THE FOLLOWING CONTRACT BE APPLIED REGARDING THE MANAGEMENT OF THE CHURCH OF TEREO—

IN THE MATTER OF THE EXCHANGE OF RYE GRAIN BETWEEN ENBERCH AND TEREO, IT BE CONDUCTED BY THE RIENDOTT COMPANY, AND THAT THE VILLAGE OF TEREO APPOINT A REPRESENTATIVE TO—

THAT THE VILLAGERS OF TEREO GRANT GOODS FROM ENBERCH AN EXEMPTION FROM TAXATION—

THE PROMISE THAT FATHER FRANZ MEDIATED BETWEEN BOTH PARTIES ...

THIS DOCUMENT SHOWS THAT THE *VILLAGE CHURCH'S* MANAGEMENT IS GUARANTEED.

THIS IS ONLY MY VIEW, BUT I DO BELIEVE THE VILLAGE OF TEREO IS PART OF THE ENBERCH CHURCH'S PARISH.

WITHOUT CONSULTING OTHERS ON THE DEFINITION OF A "VILLAGE CHURCH," I'M AFRAID...

THIS IS DECEP-TION...

THEN WHAT OF THE GOD TRUYEO?

THAT, OF COURSE, WE CANNOT ABIDE.

EVEN SPEAKING SUCH NAMES WITHIN THESE SACRED WALLS IS HERESY.

.....

THE PEOPLE OF THE VILLAGE WILL NOT ACCEPT THIS.

TAKE HEART, VILLAGE ELDER!

THEIR HEARTS MAY FEEL EMPTY AT FIRST...

...BUT IF THE PEOPLE OF YOUR VILLAGE JUST COME REGULARLY TO THE CHURCH, THEIR HEARTS WILL SOON BE FILLED ANEW.

TAXES ON GRAIN MAY RISE A BIT, BUT UNDER THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE ENBERCH PARISH...

...WE CAN BUILD NEW ROADS AND OPEN NEW MARKETS.

LORD BISHOP.

HM?

.....

ZAKU (SHOCK)

!

BEFORE FATHER FRANZ PASSED AWAY, HE SENT LETTERS ALL AROUND.

I AM MANAGING THIS.

INCLUDING FATHER FRANZ'S OWN LETTER.

IT'S TRUE THAT THIS CHURCH NOW HAS NO HOLY RELICS.

AND I AM STILL A NOVICE.

BUT ACCORDING TO CHURCH LAW, WITH THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF FIVE PRIEST-COUNCILLORS, I CAN INHERIT THE CARE OF THE CHURCH.

...HAVE YOU GATHERED FIVE LETTERS OF RECOM-MENDATION?

GOKU (GULP)

...I CAN, I KNOW IT.

APOLOGIES FOR DISTURBING THE FUNERAL.

GATA (CLATTER)

FUU (SIGH)

THIS IS A TERRIBLE FARCE.

DID YOU STAY SILENT ALL THIS TIME IN ORDER TO DIVINE OUR THINKING?

GISHI (CREAK)

...A VERY PREPARED MAN.

UP UNTIL THE VERY END, FRANZ WAS...

IT SEEMS I'VE FAILED IN MY EDUCATION OF THE GIRL.

GOTO (RATTLE)

GOTO

IT'S ALL RIGHT, ELSA.

YET I REMEMBER WHEN WE ENDURED HEAVY TAXES FROM ENBERCH.

JUST LIVING AT THAT LEVEL OF POVERTY WAS AGONY...

WE'RE NOT HOPING FOR A SUDDEN CHANGE.

I STILL NEED TWO MORE RECOMMEN-DATIONS.

WILL MY LETTERS REACH THEM INTACT?

SORRY, I DIDN'T MEAN TO EAVES-DROP.

PFFT!

I OWE FATHER FRANZ, AFTER ALL.

I'LL HELP TOO!

COME NOW, EAT, EAT!

...I'LL KEEP AN EAR OPEN AROUND THE TAVERN TO SEE IF ENBERCH'S UP TO ANYTHING STRANGE.

BUT ANY-WAY ...

AND...

...SOMETHING ELSE, AS WELL...

I MUST PROTECT THE CHURCH... AND THE VILLAGE.

LORD, I THANK YOU FOR YOUR GRACE.

...FROM THE PEOPLE WHO SUPPORTED MY FATHER.

I'LL BE LOOKING FOR HELP...

NEED OTHER DOCUMENTS BESIDES THE LETTERS OF RECOMMEN-DATION.

KON

KON CKNOCK

GON CKNOCK.

GOOD MORNING! I BROUGHT BREAD.

GACHA CKACHAK.

GOOD MORNING, EVAN!

IT'LL BE COATED WITH FLOUR IN THE WHEELHOUSE EITHER WAY.

COME HERE...

YOU'VE GOT BED-HEAD.

KARI

KARI (SKRITCH)

KARI

GACHA

WHO'S THERE?

GOON

GOON (CLANK)

WHAT ABOUT HER...?

A... MERCHANT?

I APOLOGIZE FOR THE INTRUSION.

MY NAME IS KRAFT LAWRENCE. I AM A TRAVELING MERCHANT.

CIRCUM-STANCES HAVE LED TO HER TRAVELING WITH ME.

WHAT IS YOUR BUSINESS HERE?

WHAT IS A MERCHANT DOING HERE THIS TIME OF YEAR?

G1

G1

G1 (CREAK)

G1

IF IT'S A PLACE I KNOW, THEN...

THOUGH I AM NOT A FULL PRIEST, I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS CHURCH. MY NAME IS ELSA SCHTING-HEIM.

AH, YES... I'D LIKE TO ASK DIRECTIONS OF THE PRIEST, IF THAT IS AT ALL POSSIBLE.

HUH?

DIREC-TIONS?

HE DOESN'T HAVE AN ENBERCH ACCENT...

THANK YOU! WE'RE LOOKING FOR THE WAY TO AN ABBEY.

DIENDRAN ABBEY, ACTUALLY...

...UNDER THE CARE OF ABBOT LOUIS LANA SCHTINGHILT.

...I KNOW IT NOT.

WHA —!?

GA (STOMP)

GIGIII (CREAAK)

GASHI (GRAB)

GU

GU

I HAVE HEARD THAT THERE IS A PRIEST HERE BY THE NAME OF FRANZ.

GU

GU

GU (PUSH)

FURA (STUMBLE)

BAN (SLAM)

EH?

WHY, YOU...!

THE FATHER PASSED AWAY IN THE SUMMER ...!

...AND I'M VERY BUSY!

GACHA (CLACK)

ARE YOU SATISFIED? I KNOW NOT OF THE ABBEY YOU SEEK...

GOTO (CLOP)

GOTO

MAYBE I SHOULD'VE LEFT A TITHE.

SHE CERTAINLY HATED YOU.

WHY NOW, OF ALL TIMES ...?

WHY ...?

SOMETIMES I WILL HAVE TO GO AWAY FROM HERE.

ELSA, MY CHILD.

BUT IT'S BECAUSE I'M DOING RESEARCH AT THE ABBEY, AND I WILL ALWAYS RETURN.

THE ABBEY?

IT'S A SECRET.

SHHH!

MOST PEOPLE, EVEN PEOPLE IN THIS VILLAGE, DON'T KNOW ABOUT IT.

THAT'S RIGHT. DIENDRAN ABBEY.

AM I...? ...FATHER FRANZ—

I CAN ONLY SHOW THE WAY THERE TO FRIENDS I TRULY TRUST.

I'LL TAKE YOU THERE ONE DAY, ELSA.

JI (SIZZLE)

JI

JI

KUSHA

KUSHA (RUFFLE)

FATHER...?

THERE SLEEPS THE MOST ANCIENT WISDOM IN THE WORLD.

BA
(DASH)

GUSHI
(RUB)

SO HE'S COME ASKING ABOUT THE ABBEY, EH?
I'VE HEARD THE RUMORS OF THE TRAVELING MERCHANT.

...
I IMAGINE HE'S MERELY HERE TO DO NORMAL BUSINESS.

HE'S AT THE INN NOW, I BELIEVE, BUT HE'LL SURELY COME HERE SOON ENOUGH.
HFF!
HFF!

GON (KNOCK)

GON

I LEAVE IT IN YOUR HANDS.

WE'LL NEED TO ASCERTAIN WHETHER HE'S AFFILIATED WITH THE RIENDOTT COMPANY.

WELL, THEN, I'LL JUST...

YOU CAN USE THE BACK DOOR.

ELDER, SIIIR! THE ONE EVERYONE'S BEEN TALKING ABOUT, HE'S HEEERE!

FIRST AS WE'RE STAYING IN YOUR VILLAGE, I SHOULD OFFER MY REGARDS.

I'M VERY PLEASED TO MEET YOU. I AM LAWRENCE, A TRAVELING MERCHANT

HERE IS SOME OF THE WHEAT I HAVE STOCKED.

HA HA HA!

...WE ARE LOOKING FOR AN ABBEY AND WERE HOPING YOU WOULD KNOW ITS LOCATION.

I HOPE THE RUMORS ABOUT ME ARE GOOD ONES.

...HAS COME TO THE ATTENTION OF THE ENTIRE VILLAGE IN ONLY HALF A DAY.

WAI MERRY

DESPITE THE SEASON, THIS STRANGE TRAVELER...

WAI

GAYA (CHATTER)

GAYA

MOGU (MUNCH) MOGU

MOGU

HE WAS REALLY NICE!

I TALKED TO MR. LAWRENCE IN FRONT OF THE MILLHOUSE.

ELSA... YOU SEEM DOWN.

SUCH FREEDOM!

MUST BE NICE, GETTING TO TRAVEL ALL OVER THE WORLD.

HAAH...

THIS VILLAGE... IT'S LIKE THE FOREST OF YOITSU...

IS IT THE THING WITH BISHOP VAN...?

PIKU (JERK)

NOT TO WORRY! THIS VILLAGE HAS LORD TRUYEO!

PORO (DROP)

AND ME T—

PORO

MIND YOUR MANNERS!

BISHI (FLICK)

PHEW...

EVEN IF WE ALL BAND TOGETHER, WE MAY STILL BE DRIVEN OUT.

YES.

YOU MEAN THE FAIRY TALE THAT FATHER FRANZ USED TO TELL? SOMETHING ABOUT THE WOLVES' PARADISE...

BIKU (F_INCH)

AH!

OWW...

THAT REMINDS ME, A MOUNTED MESSENGER JUST RETURNED TO THE VILLAGE ELDER'S HOUSE!

!

WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR MANNERS?

ER... AH...

HONESTLY.

GATAN (CLATTER)

!

THE ELDER ASKED ME TO PASS IT ON TO YOU.

...SO I MADE SURE TO HEAR EVERY-THING.

IT'S ALREADY QUITE LATE...

I'D ALMOST FORGOTTEN ABOUT IT

DO

DO

DO (THUMP)

AND ...?

IT WAS A MESSAGE FROM A NOBLE SAYING HE'D ACKNOWLEDGE TEREO'S CHURCH AS LEGITIMATELY ESTABLISHED.

AAH...

NOW, LET'S EAT!

THIS WILL ALLAY THE DANGER FROM THE ENBERCH PARISH A BIT...

NOW, IF I CAN ONLY GET THE LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION...

I'VE JUST BEEN SO BUSY LATELY...

GOT TO KEEP THINGS NEAT

WHEN...

THE HOLLOWS THAT FATHER'S KNEES MADE...

...WHEN HE PRAYED HERE.

GO (THOK)

GI (CREAK)

EVAN ...!

GON (KNOCK)

KO KON KON

GOOD DAY, MISS ELSA.

KAA (BLUSH)

.....

AS SUCH, WE'VE COME TO PRAY FOR SAFE TRAVELS.

THOUGH IT BE A BIT EARLIER THAN WE EXPECTED, WE'LL BE MOVING ON TO THE NEXT TOWN.

SPICE & WOLF

THOUGH IT'S A BIT EARLIER THAN WE EXPECTED, WE'LL BE MOVING ON TO THE NEXT TOWN.

AS SUCH, WE'VE COME TO PRAY FOR SAFE TRAVELS.

...IF THAT IS THE CASE...

...THEN PLEASE, COME IN.

I'LL MAKE THE PREPARATIONS.

KO (CLICK)

KO

I HEARD FROM MR. EVAN THAT YOU'VE BEEN FACING A DIFFICULT SITUATION.

...I GATHER YOU'VE COME TO ASK ABOUT THE ABBEY AGAIN?

GYU (CLUTCH)

GARI (SCRAPE)

GARI

I LEARNED OF THE ABBEY FROM A NUN IN THE TOWN OF KUMERSUN.

THE SOURCE WAS A BIT ECCENTRIC AND MAY HAVE MISLED US.

NO, NO. I'VE ALREADY INQUIRED WITH THE ELDER, WHO SAID HE KNEW NOTHING OF IT.

I SEE.

...MUST HAVE BEEN A MAN OF GREAT FAITH.

FATHER FRANZ...

HM?

HE TRULY WAS...

YES, YOU'RE RIGHT.

AH...

NOW, IF YOU'LL SIT HERE, I'LL BEGIN THE PRAYER.

...I MUST GIVE MY CONFESSION.

AH, BEFORE WE START...

GISHI GREAK

...IN THAT CASE, THERE'S ANOTHER ROOM...

ER, WELL...

VERY WELL.

NO, I WILL GIVE IT HERE.

BEFORE GOD.

.....

SUUU (INHALE)

CONFESS YOUR SINS...

...FOR GOD IS ALWAYS FORGIVING TO THOSE WHO ARE HONEST.

I HAVE BEEN DECEPTIVE FOR MY OWN GAIN.

THOUGH GOD KNOWS ALL, HE STILL WISHES TO HEAR YOU SPEAK YOUR TRANS-GRESSIONS.

YOU HAVE CONFESSED YOUR SIN BEFORE GOD. NOW HAVE YOU THE COURAGE TO TELL THE TRUTH?

I HAVE.

DO NOT BE AFRAID. GOD IS ALWAYS MERCIFUL TO THOSE WHOSE FAITH IS GOOD.

I TRICKED SOMEONE USING A FALSE PRETENSE.

IN WHAT WAY?

I LIED TODAY.

IN ORDER TO LEARN IT, I LIED.

THERE WAS SOMETHING I HAD TO KNOW.

...FOR WHAT REASON?

TO WHOM... DID YOU LIE?

ゴク

GOKU (GULP)

I HAVE NOW CONFESSED MY LIE BEFORE GOD.

I HAVE TOLD THE TRUTH.

TO YOU, MISS ELSA.

...AND I HAVE COME TO ASK YOU ITS LOCATION.

I AM SEEKING DIENDRAN ABBEY...

I HAVE NOT COME HERE TO ASK THE LOCATION.

EH?

NO, THAT IS ANOTHER LIE.

I HAVE COME TO ASK WHETHER THIS IS DIENDRAN ABBEY.

.....!

FURA (WOBBLE)

GA (TRIP)

YORO (TOTTER)

MISS ELSA, THIS IS DIENDRAN ABBEY.

...AND FATHER FRANZ WAS ALSO LOUIS LANA SCHTINGHILT. DO I NOT SPEAK THE TRUTH?

!!

ZA (SHK)

HERE... BEFORE GOD...

WE SIMPLY WISH TO KNOW THE CONTENTS OF THE PAGAN TALES THAT FATHER FRANZ COLLECTED.

MISS ELSA.

IT'S NOT FOR BUSINESS.

.....

NO DOUBT THERE ARE MANY FORBIDDEN TEXTS IN FATHER FRANZ'S RESEARCH.

YOUR CAUTION COMES FROM NOT WANTING TO REVEAL THE ARCHIVES TO ENBERCH, YES?

AND CERTAINLY HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH ENBERCH.

WHO... WHO ARE YOU?

WE MUST SEE FATHER FRANZ'S RECORDS.

GASHAN (CLANK)

...A SATISFYING ANSWER.

WHO ARE WE? THAT IS A QUESTION TO WHICH IT IS DIFFICULT TO GIVE...

WE WANT TO SEE THEM BADLY ENOUGH THAT WE'RE WILLING TO EMPLOY THESE UPSETTING METHODS.

—NO, WHY I AM FORCING THIS ISSUE.

THERE IS A REASON, THOUGH, WHY WE—

SHA

SHA (SWF)

...WHAT...

WHAT REASON?

AH...
AH...

PAKU (GAPE)

PAKU

I AM HOLO THE WISEWOLF.

AND I SEEK MY HOMELAND OF YOITSU.

WOULD YOU CARE TO TOUCH THEM?

NIKO (GRIN)

THIS REASON.

ZULU (SHIFF)

MISS ELSA!

.....

DOSA (SLUMP)

FATHER...

FATHER, I-I DON'T UNDERSTAND.

GUTSU (BLUB)

GUTSU

HA HA HA!

WHEN YOU SAY SUCH FLATTERING THINGS ABOUT ME, I WORRY IT'S A PRELUDE TO SOMETHING FRIGHTENING.

AND RESPECTED ENOUGH TO BECOME A PRIEST...

?

YOU ARE SO DEVOUT, FATHER.

ISN'T THE STUDY OF PAGAN GODS DANGEROUS TO OUR FAITH?

WHY...DID YOU CREATE THE ABBEY?

PLEASE DON'T MAKE SPORT OF ME

HAVE YOU EVER IMAGINED THE FORM OF GOD, ELSA?

HM?

I DON'T KNOW...!

BUT THERE WERE EXCEPTIONS.

THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN THE PAGAN GODS BELIEVE THOSE GODS ONCE HAD PHYSICAL FORM AND WORSHIP THEM IN THEIR TRADITIONS AND FESTIVALS.

MOSTLY, IT WAS MERE DEIFICATION OF NATURAL PHENOMENA LIKE FORESTS, RIVERS, AND SPRINGS.

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

Ah...

I'VE TOLD YOU OF SOME OF THEM, LIKE THE WISEWOLVES OF THE FOREST OF YOITSU...

あ
あ
AAH...

ARE YOU NOT GOING TO TIE ME UP?

IF IT SEEMED LIKE YOU WERE GOING TO CALL FOR SOMEONE, I WAS PREPARED FOR THAT.

I HAVE ROPE AT THE READY.

AND IF I SHOULD CALL OUT NOW?

THAT WOULD BENEFIT NEITHER YOU NOR US.

MO...

YORO

YORO SHAKE

JI (STARE)

U?

'TWOULD BE BETTER FOR US IF YOU WERE TO THINK OF IT AS SUCH.

WHAT I SAW WAS NOT A DREAM, WAS IT?

IT IS SAID THAT DEMONS TRICK HUMANS THROUGH DREAMS.

WILL YOU SHOW US THE WRITINGS OF FATHER FRANZ?

I ASK YOU AGAIN.

SO LONG AS WE REACH OUR GOAL, WE WILL DISAPPEAR LIKE A DREAM AND TROUBLE YOU NO FURTHER.

I-I STILL CANNOT BE SURE THAT YOU WERE NOT SENT FROM ENBERCH.

BUT IF THAT IS NOT THE CASE...WHAT IS YOUR GOAL?

I WISH TO RETURN TO MY HOME.

YOUR HOME...

BUT AGES HAVE PASSED SINCE I WAS THERE.

INDEED, I CANNOT EVEN BE SURE IT STILL EXISTS.

AND I KNOW NOT IF MY OLD FRIENDS ARE WELL.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO...?

...IF YOU LEARNED THERE MIGHT BE SOMEONE WHO KNEW SOMETHING OF YOUR HOME?

SHE'S... REAL...?

KOKU (NOD)

.....

I AM A SERVANT OF GOD.

WA! —!?

BUT...

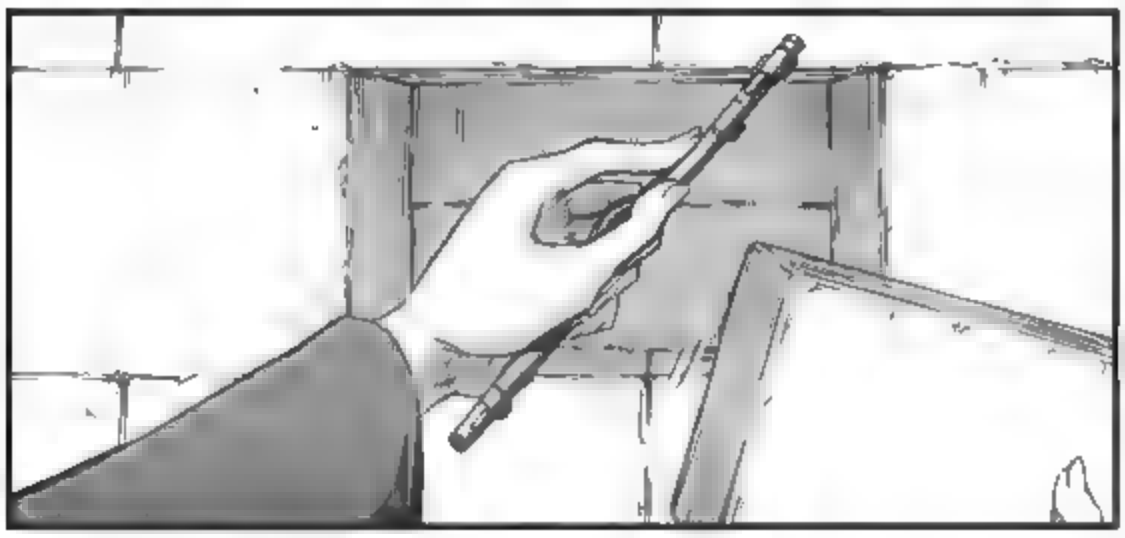
...AT THE SAME TIME, I AM FATHER FRANZ'S SUCCESSOR.

I WILL SHOW YOU.

AHEM!

PLEASE COME WITH ME.

ZUZU
CKRRK
ズ//
ズ//



カチ
GACHA
(CLICK)

THE STATUE CAN NOW BE MOVED, BUT I CANNOT DO IT...
UNDER-STOOD.

GU (YANK)

.....

...WHAT FATHER'S ANSWER MEANT...

I HAVE TO KNOW...

KOKU (NOD)

GAKON (KATHUNK)

GO

GO

GO

GOGO (RAMBE)

THERE, NOW THE PEDESTAL SHOULD MOVE ASIDE.

I HAVE TO KNOW...

SHALL WE GO IN?

I WILL GO FIRST.

SPICE & WOLF

I JUST CAN'T SLEEP WELL UNLESS I DRINK THIS BEFORE BED.

THANK YOU, ELSA.

THIS IS THE LAST OF MY WRITING, SO...

WELL, ONCE YOU HAVE DRUNK IT, PLEASE GO TO BED.

NIKO (SMILE)

IT LOOKS AS THOUGH I'LL MAKE IT IN TIME FOR BED.

FATHER...

YOU...

...YOU MENTIONED THE FORM OF GOD EARLIER...

HAVE YOU LEARNED ANYTHING?

.....

I STILL DON'T HAVE AS MUCH FAITH AS MY FATHER...!

GYH (CLENCH)

...I AM WELL!

THE AIR SEEMS A BIT STALE, SO BE CAREFUL.

MISS ELSA, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

I ADDRESS THIS LETTER TO WHOMEVER SHOULD FIRST ENTER DIENDRAN ABBEY AFTER MY DEATH.

MY THANKS!

BA (LEAP)

IT'S A LETTER.

I APOLOGIZE FOR THE WAIT.

NOT AT ALL. IS THAT —?

AS YOU ENTER, THERE IS A CATALOGUE OF BOOKS ON THE DESK TO YOUR LEFT.

IT SHOULD BE OF SOME HELP IN FINDING THE RECORDS YOU SEEK.

THE GIRL NAMED HOLO, THE WISE-WOLF OF YOITSU...

...KEPT READING WELL INTO THE NIGHT.

IN TRUTH, THEY HAD VACATED THE INN AND HARDLY MOVED FROM THE ENTRANCE TO THE ABBEY...

...ALL TO NOSE ABOUT THE GIRL'S AFFAIRS.

THE TRAVELING MERCHANT LEFT A TITHE TO PAY FOR THE CANDLES THEY USED, AND IT WAS ENOUGH TO FILL THE LIBRARY WITH CANDLES.

BUT WAS HE A TRUE PATRON?

MR. LAWRENCE, WERE YOU A MILLER TOO, ONCE!?

NO, BUT I ONCE DID WORK AS A TAX COLLECTOR. IT WAS FOR THE BUTCHER TAX ON MEAT.

THINGS LIKE HOW MUCH TAX THEY OWED FOR SLAUGHTERING ONE PIG, YOU SEE.

OH, I NEVER REALIZED.

GABW (GLUG)

AH, TOWNS...

GABW

SO IT'S TAXED IN ORDER TO PAY FOR THE CLEANUP— BUT OF COURSE NOBODY WANTS TO PAY.

CLEANING MEAT AND BONES TAINTS THE RIVER AND CREATES A LOT OF GARBAGE.

TAXATION RIGHTS ARE AUCTIONED OFF TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER BY TOWN OFFICIALS.

AND THEN YOU'RE ON YOUR OWN.

I ONLY DID IT A COUPLE OF TIMES WHEN I WAS JUST STARTING OUT.

IN THE END, I WOULD HAVE TO CRY AND BEG TO GET PEOPLE TO PAY. IT WAS AWFUL.

I SURELY UNDER-STAND!

UN (NOD)

UN

EVEN AT MY LITTLE MILL, ONLY THE VILLAGE ELDER IS GLAD TO PAY TAXES.

BUT AFTER THAT IT'S EASY, SINCE THE VILLAGE SELLS ALL ITS GRAIN TO ENBERCH.

HA HA HA!

(HIRA (GLANCE)

.....

WE'RE EQUAL WITH ENBERCH.

THEY BUY OUR WHEAT, WE BUY OTHER THINGS FROM THEM.

MUCHA (MUNCH)

MUCHA

WHAT'S MORE, WHEN WE BUY WINE OR CLOTHING FROM ENBERCH, WE PAY NO TAXES.

IMPRESSIVE, EH?

AH!

OH.

H-HOW DID YOU KNOW?

DID FATHER FRANZ ARRANGE THIS EXCHANGE?

TOO RIGHT!

THE MORE I HEAR OF IT, THE MORE IMPRESSIVE IT SEEMS.

WELL!

HE WAS FORMIDABLE ENOUGH TO BUILD A CHURCH IN THE MIDDLE OF A TOWN THAT WORSHIPS PAGAN GODS.

IT'S NO SURPRISE HE'D BE INVOLVED IN IMPORTANT VILLAGE MATTERS.

HOHHH?

EVAN!

GATA (CLATTER)

YOU'RE QUITE A MAN, MR. LAWRENCE!

TEAR OFF A PIECE OF BREAD, THEN EAT IT!

AAAH!

ALSO ...

THEY ARE GUESTS! IT'S EMBARRASSING!

AND DON'T BE SO MESSY.

DON'T STAND IN THE MIDDLE OF A MEAL!

GUI (GRAB)

GUI

FINE, FINE!

TSURU (SLICK)

...HERE, I'VE SHELLED THE EGGS.

TSURU

AH, WHERE WAS I ...?

HA HA HA!

ANYWAY, MR. LAWRENCE, AS YOU WERE SAYING...

WHEN OUR LUCK WAS BAD, WE'D BE STOPPED FOR DAYS AND WOULD GET RATHER HUNGRY.

IT WAS QUITE A SIGHT, SEEING SO MANY SHIPS NEARBY, ALL WAITING FOR A FAVORABLE WIND.

I WAS TALKING ABOUT MY TRIP ABOARD A MERCHANT SHIP...

WE'D HAVE IT TOPPED WITH BEANS AND MINCEMEAT. DELICIOUS!

BREAD WITHOUT A RISE ISN'T BREAD AT ALL!

JYURU (DROOL)

SINCE THERE WERE MERCHANTS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD ON THE SHIP, THERE WAS A HUGE VARIETY OF FOOD.

THE FLAT BREAD THEY BAKED IN THE BOTTOM OF A BOWL WAS ESPECIALLY TASTY.

YOU MEAN BREAD NOT BLESSED BY THE BREAD SPIRITS?

ISN'T THAT JUST A FAILURE?

YOU WOULD NOT EAT UNLEAVENED BREAD, THEN?

THE GUILD IS TERRIFYING.

I SUPPOSE NORMALLY THE BAKERS' GUILD CAN BE QUITE NASTY, SO YOU MIGHT NOT HAVE HAD A CHANCE TO EACH SUCH A THING.

—SOME BEANS WOULDN'T BE BAD AT ALL...

IF THEY SEE SO MUCH AS THE SMOKE FROM AN OVEN, THEY'LL BE ON YOU IN AN INSTANT.

I DON'T DOUBT IT!

HA HA HA!

IT IS THANKS TO YOUR GENEROUS DONATION. THIS IS THE LEAST I COULD DO.

NOT AT ALL.

MY DEEPEST THANKS TO YOU FOR PREPARING SUCH A FEAST FOR US.

I TRULY APPRECI-ATE IT.

I KNOW YOUR AIM IS THE NORTHLANDS, AND SNOW WILL MAKE YOUR SITUATION MORE DIFFICULT.

IF YOU WISH TO READ THE BOOKS AT NIGHT AS WELL, I DO NOT MIND.

SO, ABOUT LATER...

KASA (RUSTLE)

WHEW

IT SMELLS JUST A BIT LIKE FATHER...

KASA

IT'S ADDRESSED TO "WHOMEVER SHOULD FIRST ENTER DIENDRAN ABBEY AFTER MY DEATH."

BUT I DO BELIEVE THAT EVEN AFTER MY DEATH, DIENDRAN ABBEY...

...WILL PROTECT THAT WHICH I LOVED.

IN SO DOING, I HAVE RISKED BEING SUSPECTED A PAGAN MYSELF AND SPREAD THIS RISK TO MY LOVED ONES.

IN THE COURSE OF MY ENDLESS SEARCH FOR TRUTH, I HAVE LEFT BEHIND THIS MONUMENT.

IN SEARCHING FOR TRACES OF THE PAGAN GODS, THE KNOWLEDGE OF THEM HAS LED ME TO BETTER UNDERSTAND MANY THINGS ABOUT OUR OWN GOD.

MY BELOVED ELSA...
YOU BEING THE FIRST TO READ THIS LETTER IS PROOF OF GOD'S PROTECTION.

HUH? NO, UM... WAS I MAKING A FACE?

THAT EXPRES-SION OF YOURS... DID A HOLE SUDDENLY OPEN IN YOUR COIN PURSE?

SURE.

GUI (SHOVE)

HERE, MAKE READY THE NEXT BOOK.

...DID I REALLY SAY SOMETHING THAT STRANGE?

AWW, I GIVE UP.

STILL, THOSE TWO CERTAINLY GOT ALONG WELL, EH?

KAAA (BLUSH)

...THAT YOU WOULD NOT SOUND SO ENVIOUS WHEN YOU SPEAK OF THEM.

I WISH...

C-COME NOW, YOU!

OH...

I UNDERSTAND, BUT...

...I DID NOT WANT TO SAY IT...

KARI

NO, I UNDER-STAND.

I TOO...

KARI (SKRITCH)

GISHI (CREAK)

NO.

NO, I UNDERSTAND, I THINK.

THAT SEEN FROM THE OUTSIDE, WE TOO MUST LOOK QUITE THE FOOLS...

GATA (CLATTER)

!

GISHI

I WAS ENVIOUS, IT'S TRUE.

BUT... NOT OF THEIR RELATIONSHIP ITSELF.

OF COURSE, I'M HELPING YOU BECAUSE I WANT TO. HOWEVER...

...WHAT WILL YOU DO AFTER WE REACH YOUR HOME?

BUT WHAT OF US?

THOSE TWO ARE PROBABLY GOING TO LIVE TOGETHER IN THE CHURCH.

ギュ…

GYU (HUG)

I KNOW NOT.

JIJI (CRACKLE)

THERE IS NO POINT IN SPECULATION.

NO, FORGET IT. I AM SORRY.

I AM...

...HOLO THE WISE-WOLF.

I AM HOLO, THE WISEWOLF OF YOITSU.

GAN (KNOCK)

I AM THE WISEWOLF OF YOITSU.

BA (BOLT)

ぱ？

POFU (WHUMP)

HAVE YOU ANY COM-PLAINTS?

NO...

NONE.

I'M GOING TO SLEEP FOR A BIT.

WILL YOU READ IN MY PLACE?

AAAAA
YAAWWNN
ラリ
あぁ

SPICE&WOLF

KASA
(RUSTLE)
THESE ARE FATHER FRANZ'S NOTES.

SPICE & WOLF

REGARDING THE STORIES IN THE OTHER BOOKS— THERE ARE MANY WHICH DIFFER IN TIME AND PLACE, BUT...

...WHICH I BELIEVE NONETHELESS REFER TO THE SAME SPIRIT.

IT IS NOT MY WISH TO REGARD THE TALES IN THIS BOOK AS SPECIAL.

HIS HANDWRITING IS MESSIER... HE MUST HAVE BEEN EXCITED.

HOWEVER, THIS PARTICULAR SPIRIT IS THE ONLY ONE WHOSE STORIES I HAVE ORGANIZED SO THOROUGHLY.

I DO NOT WISH TO LET BIAS CLOUD MY VIEW OF ALL THE TALES.

IF POSSIBLE, I HOPE THAT ONE WOULD JUDGE WITH THE OPEN HEART OF THOSE WHOSE LOVE OF GOD IS LIKE A ZEPHYR IN AN OPEN FIELD.

THAT IS WHY I HAVE VENTURED TO LEAVE THIS BOOK IN AMONG ALL THE OTHERS.

PARA (FLIP)

...DID NOT REALIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE "MOON-HUNTING BEAR."

YET I CANNOT HELP BUT WONDER IF THE PAGANS OF THE NORTHLANDS THEMSELVES...

YOITSU...

.....

KUU

KUU (SNORE)

IT WILL BE DAWN SOON.

YOU'VE BEEN AWAKE ALL THIS TIME?

IT'S A BIT LATE FOR THIS, BUT I REALIZE WE PRESUMED UPON YOU.

ズズ IUZU (SLURP)

.....

I MUST APOLOGIZE EVEN AS I THANK YOU.

YES, IT'S TRUE YOU FORCED ME.

ALL WE WISH TO DO IS LEARN MORE OF THE NORTH-LANDS.

BUT YOUR SUSPICION IS COMPLETELY UNDER-STANDABLE.

NO.

I NO LONGER DOUBT EITHER OF YOU.

CHIRA (GLANCE)

ITS NAME WAS... HOLOU.

!

...THERE WAS ONE ABOUT A WOLF SPIRIT IN YOITSU.

IN ONE OF THE TALES I HEARD FROM FATHER FRANZ...

HOWEVER, YOU WILL ONLY BE ABLE TO GET SINCERE ANSWERS ON THINGS OUTSIDE OF BUSINESS.

NIKA (GRIN)

I CANNOT HEAR YOUR CONFESSION, BUT I MAY BE ABLE TO GIVE YOU SOME ADVICE.

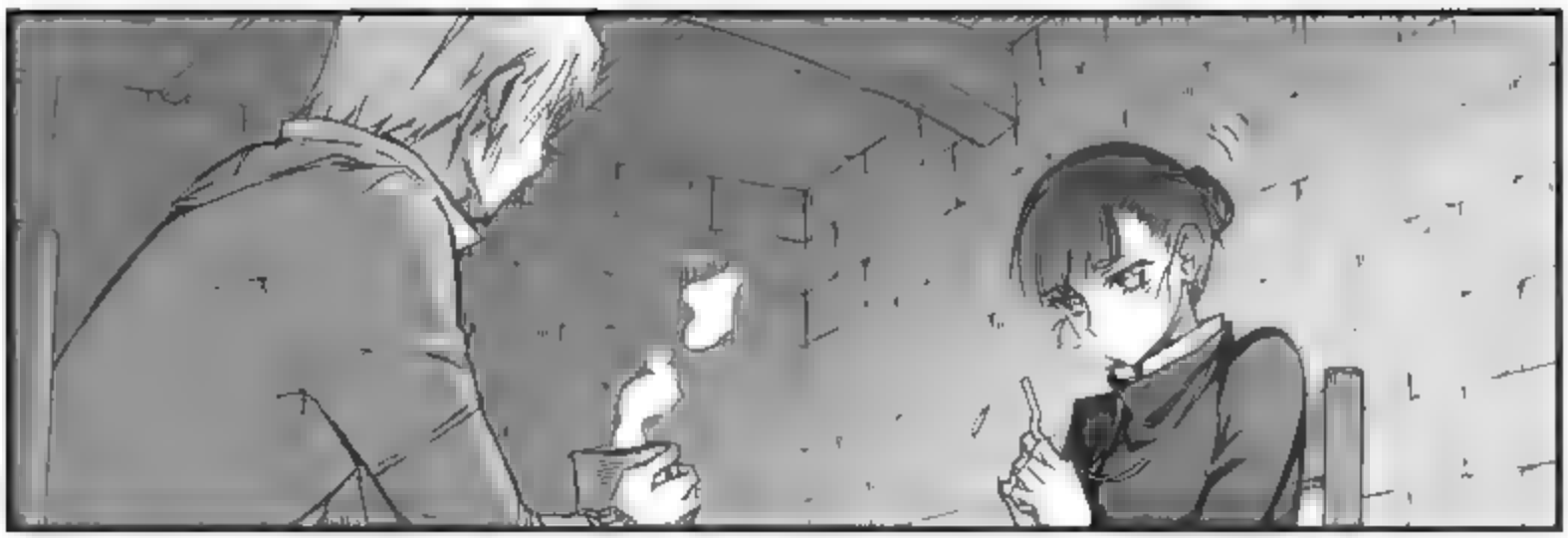
...THEN WHAT DOES THAT MAKE OUR GOD, IN WHOSE NAME WE CONVERTED THE PAGANS ...?

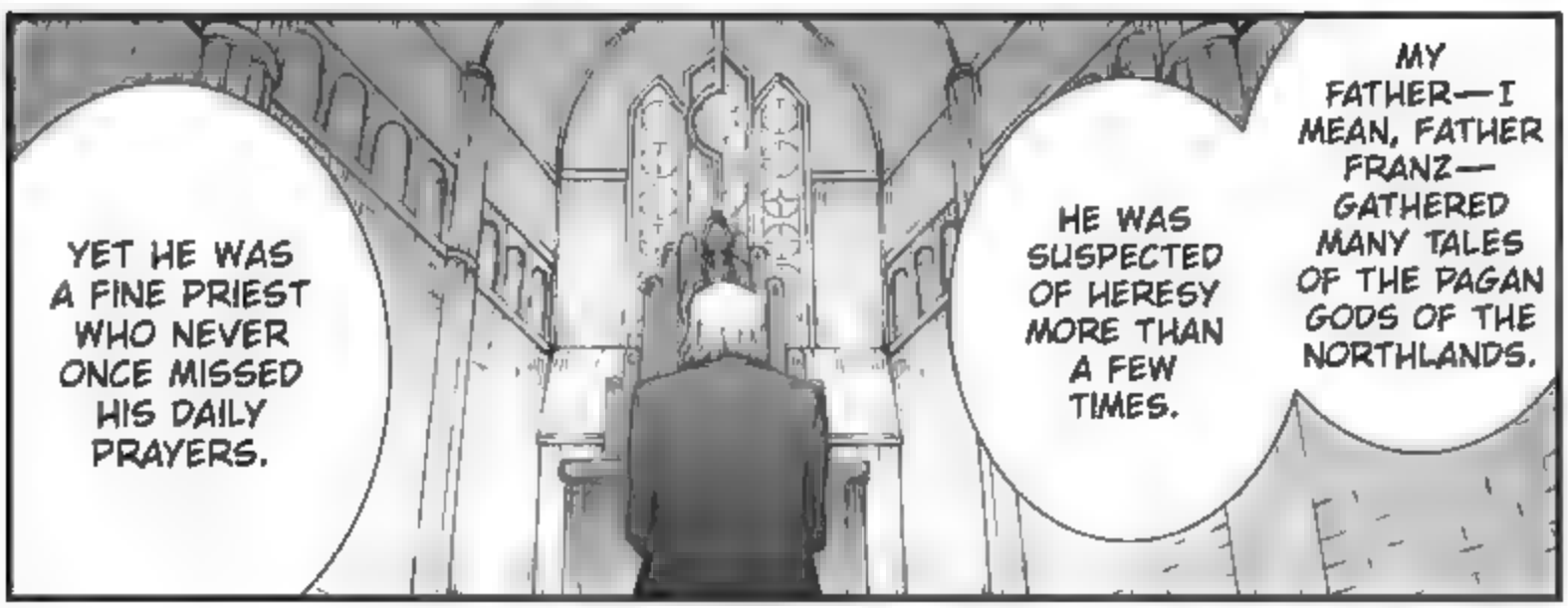
IF...

NO, THE QUESTION I HAVE MAY WELL BE BEST ASKED OF A PERSON LIKE YOU.

MIGHT I ASK YOU, THEN?

...IF THE STORIES COLLECTED IN THE BOOKS IN THE CELLAR ARE NOT FALSE...




YET HE WAS A FINE PRIEST WHO NEVER ONCE MISSED HIS DAILY PRAYERS.
HE WAS SUSPECTED OF HERESY MORE THAN A FEW TIMES.
MY FATHER—I MEAN, FATHER FRANZ—GATHERED MANY TALES OF THE PAGAN GODS OF THE NORTHLANDS.

...THAT MEANS THE GOD WE BELIEVE IN IS A LIE.
...YOUR COMPANION TRULY IS A PAGAN SPIRIT...
IF...

...NEVER ONCE DOUBTED GOD, NOT EVEN ON HIS DEATHBED ...!
AND YET, FATHER...

MY COMPANION...

AS I AM NOW, I HAVE NOT THE COURAGE TO REBUKE THE TWO OF YOU, SCRIPTURES AND HOLY WATER IN HAND—

...THOUGH HER TRUE FORM IS A GIANT WOLF, DOES NOT WISH TO BE CALLED A GOD, NOR WORSHIPPED AS ONE.

BUT I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT FATHER FRANZ WAS MISTAKEN.

I AM, AS YOU SEE, NOTHING MORE THAN A MERCHANT OF NO SPECIAL BIRTH. I KNOW LITTLE OF THE TEACHINGS OF GOD.

(GULP)

ゴク

GON (KNOCK)

GATA (CLATTER)

WHY ...!?

WHY DO YOU BELIEVE THAT!?

GOKON (KNOCK)

KOKU (NOD)

I'LL GO WAKE HOLO.

WHAT'S WRONG, EVAN!?

OWWW!

!?

BAN (SLAM)

GON (KNOCK)

KOKON (KNOCK)

GON KOKON

GACHA (KACHAK)

GON (KNOCK)

THEY JUST SENT A HORSE... THE VILLAGE ELDER IS COMING HERE!

SOMEONE IN ENBERCH ATE WHEAT FROM THIS VILLAGE AND DIED!

THE WHEAT PLAGUE, EH...?

RIDELIUS'S HELLFIRE.

INDEED...

ZAWA

ZAWA (BUZZ)

ZAWA

BUT I HOPE THAT AS SOMEONE WHO HAS TRAVELED MUCH, YOU WILL UNDERSTAND.

MY APOLOGIES FOR DISTURBING YOUR HOLY TIME IN THE CHURCH.

WE MAY CAUSE YOU SOME INCONVENIENCE FOR A TIME. PLEASE BEAR WITH US.

I AM A MERCHANT WHO BELONGS TO THE ROWEN TRADE GUILD.

ZUI (STEP)

MANY PEOPLE IN THE GUILD'S HOUSE IN KUMERSUN ARE AWARE THAT I HAVE COME TO THIS VILLAGE.

OF COURSE, ELDER SEM, SO LONG AS YOU ARE TAKING APPRO-PRIATE ACTIONS...

...THEN AS A TRAVELER I WILL CERTAINLY ABIDE BY THEM.

.....

THAT WILL DEPEND ON WHETHER YOU SPEAK THE TRUTH.

I MUST KNOW ONE MORE THING!

NO ONE FROM OUR VILLAGE HAS BEEN POISONED?

ZAWA

WE'LL NEVER MAKE T THROUGH THE WINTER ON WHAT'S LEFT OVER FROM LAST YEAR.

ZAWA

SO AT LEAST WE KNOW THE WHEAT WE GROUND BEFORE THAT IS SAFE.

ZAWA

THE NEW WHEAT WAS ONLY USED TO BAKE BREAD FOR THE HARVEST FESTIVAL, RIGHT?

ZAWA

GRANDMA JEAN IS SICK IN BED, BUT IT'S JUST A COLD.

ZAWA (BUZZ)

IF IT WENT UNNOTICED DURING THE HARVEST AND WAS GROUND INTO FLOUR, IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO FIND.

THERE WAS A RARE PARASITIC FUNGUS THAT ATTACKED WHEAT GRAINS.

A PLACE CALLED RIDELIUS ABBEY TREATED A PARTICULARLY LARGE NUMBER OF CASES, AND IT BEGAN TO BE CALLED "RIDELIUS'S HELLFIRE."

THE LIMBS OF THOSE WHO ATE IT WOULD ROT, AND THEY WOULD GO MAD BEFORE DYING. THE STRIKEN WOULD OFTEN GO TO CHURCHES FOR TREATMENT.

HAKIM SAID THAT A SHOEMAKER ATE BREAD MADE FROM WHEAT HE BOUGHT FROM RIENDOTT, THEN DIED.

THE ENBERCH COUNCIL SOON FOUND OUT THAT IT WAS MADE WITH WHEAT FROM OUR VILLAGE.

IT MEANS WE'LL HAVE TO RETURN THE MONEY.

R-RETURN THE WHEAT... THAT MEANS...

HAKIM RODE BACK TO TEREO RIGHT AWAY, SO HE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED AFTER THAT, BUT WE CAN GUESS.

THE FEUDAL LORD, DUKE BADON, IS SURE TO SEND A MESSENGER TO ENSURE THE RETURN OF THE WHEAT.

HE'S THE ONE WHO MIXED POISON WHEAT IN WITH THE HARVEST!

SHIN (HUSH)

WAAA CROOOARD

I ASKED HIM, AND HE ADMITTED TO BRINGING WHEAT IN!

HE'S HERE TO RUIN OUR HARVEST AND THEN FORCE US TO BUY HIS WHEAT!

TH-THAT MUST BE IT! I SAW HIM GO TO EVAN'S...!

AYE, IT'S EVAN! WHERE DID THAT LYING MILLER SCUM GO!?

LET'S STRING THEM UP AND MAKE THEM TELL US EVERY-THING!!

PLEASE WAIT!

THIS IS NO TIME FOR WOMEN TO INTERRUPT! GET BACK!

BA WHAP

ZUI CLOOMD

EXCUSE ME?

.....

WHAT IS IMPORTANT RIGHT NOW IS THE WHEAT THAT MAY BE RETURNED ...

...AND THE MONEY THEY'RE SURE TO ASK FOR.

EVAN IS IN THE CHURCH. WE CAN ASSIGN BLAME LATER.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, IIMA...?

IF ONLY ENBERCH WOULD BE SATISFIED WITH SIMPLE REPAYMENT.

ENBERCH ISN'T ALLOWED TO DO ANYTHING TO THIS VILLAGE!

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, IIMA?

FATHER FRANZ HAS ALREADY MADE IT SO!

THIS FITS PERFECTLY WITH ENBERCH'S MOTIVES.

THEY'LL SURELY USE THIS AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO RESTORE THE OLD ARRANGE-MENT.

HISO (PSST)

HISO

THE PEOPLE OF THIS VILLAGE KNOW NOTHING OF THE WORLD...

ZAWA

ZAWA

ZAWA

ZAWA (BLIZZ)

HISO

...A MERE GIRL!

HISO

THEY'LL NEVER RESPECT ...

BOSU (MUMBLE)

ANYWAY, WE SHOULD NEVER HAVE ALLOWED ELSA TO INHERIT FATHER FRANZ'S POSITION!

ENOUGH!

...AS WELL AS HOW MANY PROVISIONS WE'VE LAID IN FOR WINTER.

IN ANY CASE, EACH OF US MUST CHECK TO SEE HOW MUCH HARVEST MONEY WE YET HAVE...

THEY MAY ARRIVE AS SOON AS DAYBREAK.

UNTIL THE ENBERCH MESSENGER ARRIVES, WE DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY'LL DEMAND.

WE SHOULD ADJOURN UNTIL THEN.

I KNOW THIS IS HARD, BUT PLEASE ENDURE.

ELSA.

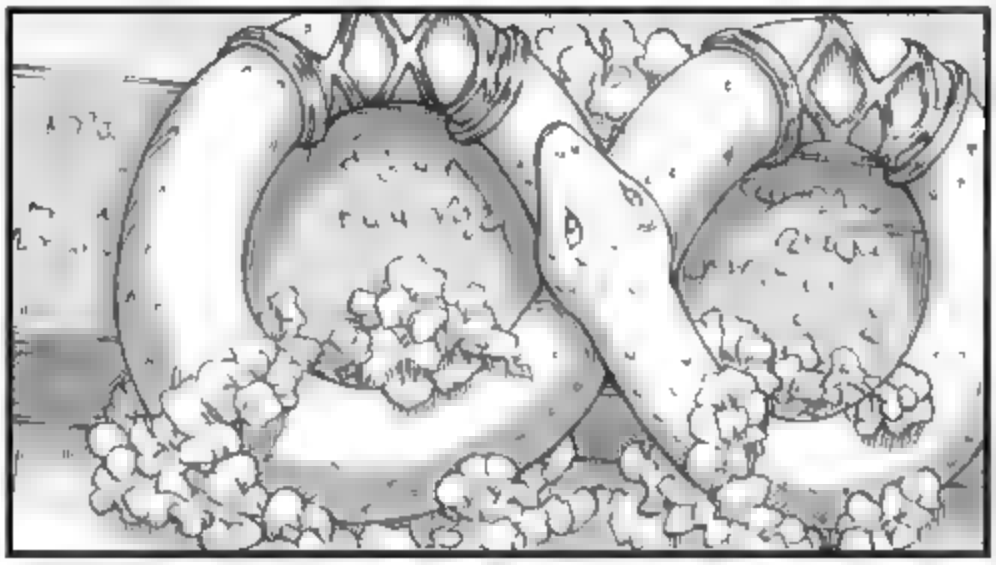
GYU (SQUEEZE)

I'LL LEAVE THAT TO YOU.

THE ANGRIEST ONES MAY ATTEMPT TO BREAK IN.

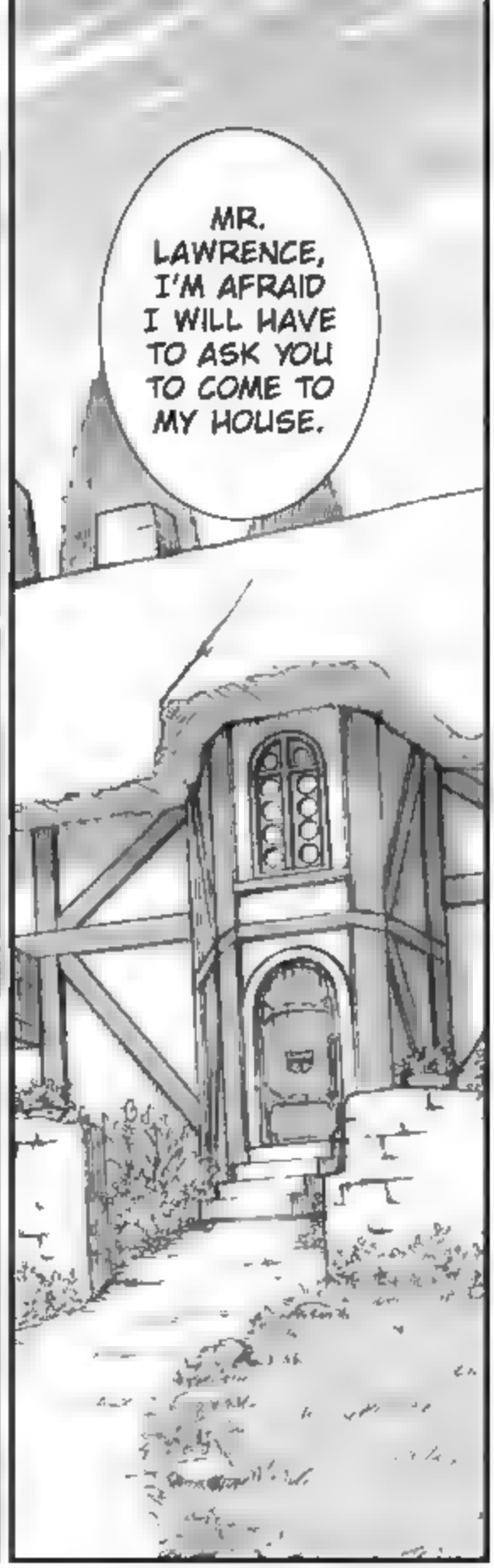
I'LL BE IN THE CHURCH WITH ELSA.

NOW, THEN.



JIIII
(STAAARE)

I SHOULD'VE GIVEN UP ON THE BOOK AND LEFT THE VILLAGE WITH YOU.
WHAT DO YOU THINK?


MR. LAWRENCE, I'M AFRAID I WILL HAVE TO ASK YOU TO COME TO MY HOUSE.

IT'S NOT CLEAR THAT WOULD ACTUALLY HAVE CHANGED ANYTHING.

THERE ARE NO OTHER GROUPS MADE UP OF A FOOLISH MERCHANT AND A BEAUTIFUL MAIDEN.

LET'S SAY THAT WE CAME IN TO ASK AFTER THE ABBEY'S LOCATION AND LEFT THE SAME DAY. THEY'D STILL BE BLAMING US.

THAT VILLAGE ELDER WILL SELL US OUT IF IT GAINS HIM EVEN A LITTLE ADVANTAGE IN NEGOTIATING WITH ENBERCH.

THEY'D SOON CATCH US ON HORSE-BACK.

COULD YOU NOT SEEK HELP WITH THE GUILD YOU'RE A MEMBER OF?

...SO THEY CERTAINLY WON'T HAVE A TRIAL TO DETERMINE OUR GUILT.

ENBERCH WON'T WANT TO GET IN TROUBLE WITH OUR TRADE GUILD...

GISHI

CREAK

YOUR FEET CAN CARRY US FASTER THAN ENBERCH OR THIS VILLAGE'S NET CAN REACH.

SOME-THING GOOD.

YOU'RE HERE!

WAIT!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

IF I COULD GET TO THE NEAREST TOWN WITH A GUILD-HOUSE...

!

HOW-EVER...

KUH FU FU!

AND THOSE TRYING TO CATCH US MAY GIVE UP THE CHASE AS SOON AS THEY SEE WE'VE ESCAPED.

FUUUH (SIGH)

...AFTER THAT, WHO DO YOU THINK WILL BE ACCUSED OF BEING THE CULPRIT?

YOU ARE ABSURDLY SOFT-HEARTED, AFTER ALL... HONESTLY, THE TROUBLE I'M PUT THROUGH ON YOUR ACCOUNT...

AND THE GIRL TOO, IF IT COMES TO THAT

FINE, THEN, LET HIM RIDE ON MY BACK AS WELL.

THE PROBLEM, THOUGH, IS THAT YOU'LL HAVE TO REVEAL YOUR TRUE FORM.

'TIS TRUE... BEING FEARED DOES WOUND MY FRAGILE HEART.

AHEM!

KUH FU FUU

OR IS IT SIMPLY THAT YOU WISH TO BE THE ONLY PERSON WHO KNOWS MY SECRET?

IT WOULD BE A SHAME TO LEAVE BEHIND THE HORSE, WAGON, AND CARGO, BUT THERE'S NOTHING FOR IT BUT TO THINK OF THEM AS FALLEN INTO A DEEP VALLEY.

BFFT!

I SUPPOSE I DON'T MIND BEING YOUR NEW WAGON?

SORRY TO KEEP YOU WAITING.

GACHA (KACHAK)

OH? I'D LIKE TO SEE THE CART HORSE THAT HOLDS ITS OWN REINS.

HA HA HA!

DAN

DAN (BANG)

DAN

DAN

DAN

DAN

DAN

THEY'RE SAYING THAT ENBERCH WILL FORGIVE THEM IF THEY HAND OVER EVAN.

IF THINGS GO SOUR, THEY MAY OFFER YOU UP TO ENBERCH AS A HERETIC TOO.

ZUI (SSK)

WE CAN'T RESPOND TO THEM NOW.

!

DAN

DAN (BANG)

DAN

DAN

LISTEN WELL, NOW. YOU CAN'T STAY IN THIS VILLAGE ANY LONGER.

THE WORLD IS VAST.

YOU UNDERSTOOD WHEN YOU SAW THOSE TWO STRANGE TRAVELERS, DIDN'T YOU?

THINK BACK, ELSA.

FATHER FRANZ WAS A CAREFUL MAN. DID HE PREPARE ANYTHING FOR A TIME LIKE THIS?

ELSA!

FATHER...

SPICE & WOLF

SFX: ZAWA (BUZZ) ZAWA

I BELIEVE MISS ELSA HAS A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE SITUATION THAN ANYONE ELSE.

...SHE'S IN THERE.

SEM GUARANTEED MY SAFETY IN EXCHANGE FOR MY WISDOM AND COIN.

BUT TO MAKE BOTH AS EFFECTIVE AS POSSIBLE, I NEED ACCURATE INFORMATION.

...AT THE MOMENT, THAT SEEMS DIFFICULT.

I'LL COME GREET HER IN A BIT. I'D ALSO LIKE THE CROWD TO DISPERSE, BUT...

WHEN

SIR!

KA
(CLICK)

KO
(CLACK)

.....

MR. LAWRENCE!?

AH!

EH?

GIGI (CREAK)

YES, WELL...

I HEARD FROM ELSA. I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU GOT OUT OF THE ELDER'S HOUSE!

I KNEW YOU WOULD COME.

PLEASE, COME IN.

YOU WAIT OUTSIDE.

!

WHAT? WHY!?

PLEASE.

GOSO (RUMMAGE)

GOSO (DIG)

I'LL LEAVE THIS WITH YOU. THINK OF IT AS PROOF THAT YOU CAN TRUST ME.

ANY MERCHANT WOULD WEEP IF HE LOST HIS COIN PURSE.

JARA (JANGLE)

EVAN.

KOKu

KOKu

I'LL TRUST YOU TO KEEP WATCH.

KOKU (NOD)

PAAA (BEEEAM)

あ

ZUSHI (CHNK)

IF ENBERCH WAS AS SKILLED AS YOU, WE WOULD HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO SURRENDER.

OH, DO YOU DOUBT US?

QUITE AN EXCELLENT PERFOR-MANCE.

HARDLY.

(GISHI
(CREAK)

STILL...TO THINK THAT ENBERCH WOULD RESORT TO SUCH THINGS...

IF I WERE ONLY A TRUE PRIEST...

I WOULD VERY MUCH LIKE TO ASK FOR AID FROM MY SUPPORTERS, BUT THEY ARE ALL OF THEM ONLY SUPPORTING ME BECAUSE OF MY FATHER'S LEGACY.

IF I ASK FOR MORE, I RISK LOSING WHAT I HAVE.

I PROPOSE TO ESCAPE THIS VILLAGE WITH YOU AND EVAN.

IF MY COMPANION AND I ESCAPE ALONE...

...THE BLAME WILL FALL UPON YOU TWO.

GIRI (CLENCH)

IT IS THUS MY OWN SELFISH WISH THAT IF THERE IS TO BE AN ESCAPE, I BRING BOTH OF YOU WITH ME.

EVAN! HONESTLY, YOU—

GATA (CLATTER)

THAT'S NOT SELFISH AT ALL!

I DON'T WANT TO DIE HERE.

GASHI (GRAB)

AND I DON'T WANT TO LET YOU DIE EITHER.

MISS ELSA, IS THERE AN ESCAPE PASSAGE OUT OF THIS CELLAR? I'VE HEARD THEY'RE COMMON IN CHURCHES.

AHEM!

SO YOU DID WANT TO ESCAPE THIS VILLAGE, ELSA!

THE VILLAGERS CLAIM TO OWE FATHER FRANZ A GREAT DEBT, BUT THEY NEVER SHOW A BIT OF GRATITUDE!

GYU (HUG)

THEY NEVER GIVE ANY TITHES TO THE CHURCH, AND IF NOT FOR ELDER SEM AND MRS. IIMA, WE'D HAVE STARVED TO DEATH LONG AGO!

I'VE LOOKED, BUT I DON'T KNOW WHERE IT IS...

I KNEW IT...

.....

I REMEMBER FATHER TELLING ME ABOUT IT WHEN HE EXPLAINED ABOUT THE CELLAR.

!!

OUT OF MY WAY.

BA (SHOVE)

KUN

クン

KUN SNIFF

KUN

KUN

AMAZING.

IT'S THIS WAY. I CAN SMELL A BIT OF FRESH AIR.

ENBERCH WILL HAVE THEIR NET CAST OVER THE ROAD.

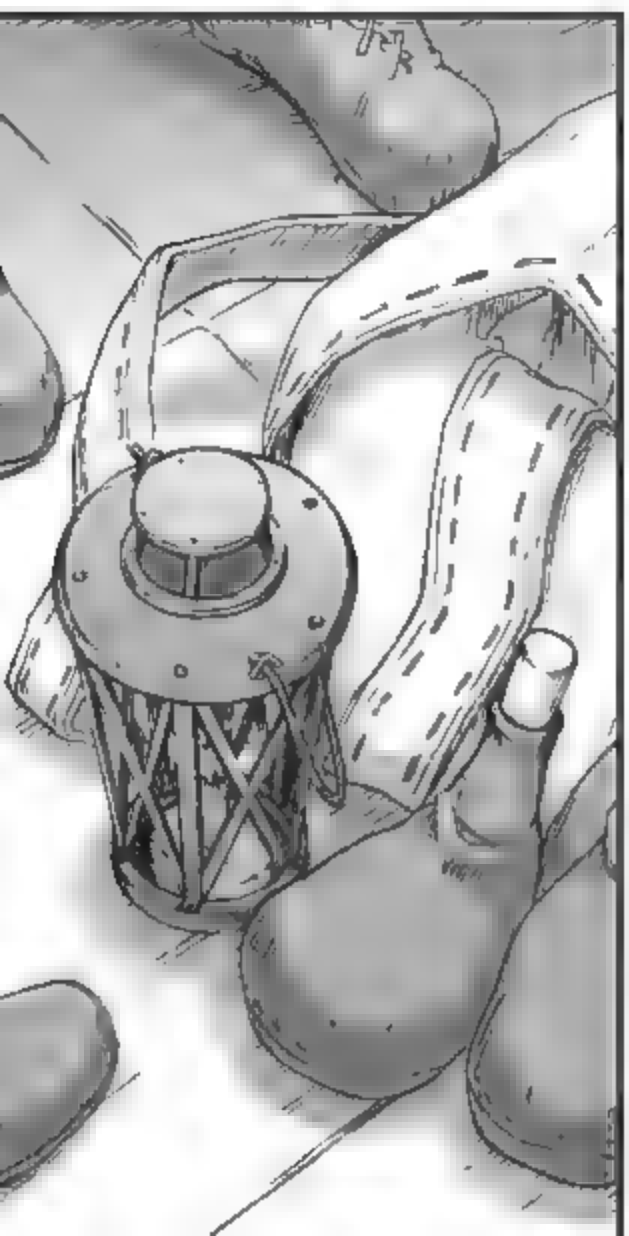
ELSA!

I'LL... I'LL ONLY BE A BURDEN TO YOU.

IF MY COMPANION WERE MERELY THE MAIDEN SHE SEEMS TO BE, THAT WOULD BE TRUE.

EVEN IF WE HAD A HORSE...

HMPH!



SPEAKING IN TERMS OF OUTCOMES, WE CAN ESCAPE.
WE CAN ESCAPE WHENEVER WE WISH.

YOU'RE QUITE RIGHT.

NO MATTER THE JOURNEY, WHEN YOU COME TO A FORK IN THE ROAD, YOU MUST DECIDE IN AN INSTANT WHICH PATH TO TAKE.

.....

DOSA (WHUMP)

!

HYOI (LIFT)

I AM SORRY, MY WEAKNESS HAS BROUGHT THIS UPON US—

THINGS WILL WORK OUT, YOU'LL SEE.

GET ALONG WITH EVAN, YOU HEAR ME?

GOGO (DIG)

EVAN.

DO YOU HAVE TRAVELING MONEY?

THIS SHOULD BE ENOUGH FOR THE FOUR OF US, PROVIDED WE'RE FRUGAL.

JARI (CLINK)

PAN (CLAP)

...OFF WITH YOU!

GOOD. RIGHT...

PAN

"IIMA" WAS HER NAME?

EVEN I CANNOT MATCH HER PRESENCE.

.....

IT'S A SHAME. I PREFER A MORE GENEROUS FIGURE.

WORRY NOT. THIS IS THE ONLY FORM I CAN ASSUME.

THE EXIT IS NEAR.

AH!

SO RUDE!

ACCORDING TO EVAN, THIS WAS THE BURROW LORD TRUYEO USED WHEN HE CAME FROM THE FAR NORTH TO HIBERNATE.

HA-HA! OH, THIS IS GREAT!

THIS IS...

!

THIS APPLE'S GONE BAD...

HUMANS... SUCH QUEER CREATURES, SO QUICK TO WORSHIP.

KUN (SNIFF)

IT JUST HAPPENED TO MAKE A BURROW HERE, AND YET PEOPLE COME TO WORSHIP. I DOUBT IT HAS EVER BEEN ABLE TO GET A PROPER NAP.

VERY CLEVER. THE VILLAGERS WOULD NEVER DARE TO ENTER.

COME.

STAYING HERE IS LIKE ASKING THEM TO FIND US!

LET US FIRST HEAD DOWN TO THE BROOK.

YOUR FUR IS LOOKING FINE AS ALWAYS.

TRULY!

WHY IS THE HUMAN FORM SO WEAK AGAINST COLD?

GOKU
NOO

BARI
BARI (CRUNCH)
BARI
BARI

AAAH
TP
TP

YOU TWO, THERE.
IF YOU COWER IN FEAR, I'LL DEVOUR YOU ON THE SPOT!

COME, CLIMB UPON ME. 'TWILL BE BOTHERSOME IF WE'RE DISCOVERED.

WAH!

THIS IS BUT A DREAM BEFORE DAWN.

INDEED...

DON'T YOU THINK?

BA (LEAP)

IF YOU EVER WISH TO SELL IT, JUST SAY THE WORD!

FUN (SNORT)

LET US BE OFF, THEN.

SO FATHER FRANZ WASN'T LYING...

GYUU (CLENCH)

MY FUR TRULY IS THE FINEST.

(KYOOO (WOOSH)
OUR PLAN IS TO SILENTLY ESCAPE.
A BIT OF FAMILIARITY WITH THE LANDSCAPE WOULD SERVE US WELL.
GOOO (WHOOSH)
WE FIRST MAKE FOR ENBERCH.
WHA —!?
ZA (ZIP)
ZA
ZA
ZA
ZA

SHOULD WE RETURN FOR IT?
...I LEFT THE BOOK HIDDEN BEHIND THE ALTAR.
DO
WH- WHAT'S WRONG?
...CURSES.
DG (STOMP)

BYUUUUU (WHSSSH)

...WHAT HAPPENED IN YOITSU, THOUGH I ALWAYS THOUGHT IT A FAIRY TALE.

IF IT'S WITHIN MY KNOWLEDGE, I CAN TELL YOU...

THEN TELL ME.

THOUGH NOW I CAN BELIEVE IT WAS TRUE.

BYUOOOO

IT WAS ONE OF A LONG SERIES OF TALES OF THE MOON-HUNTING BEAR, HOW IT ROAMED THE LANDS, SLAYING SPIRITS WHEREVER IT WENT.

IN THE BEAUTIFUL FORESTS OF YOITSU THERE FLOURISHED A WOLF-SPIRIT NAMED "HOLOU" AND HER PACK.

SOME TIME THEREAFTER, IT'S SAID THAT THE MOON-HUNTING BEAR ATTACKED THE FOREST, AND THE REMAINING WOLVES SCATTERED WITHOUT SO MUCH AS SHOWING THEIR FANGS.

ONE DAY, HOLOU BECAME FASCINATED BY THE SOUTHLANDS AND LEFT THE FOREST.

BYOOO

HOLO...

THE MOON-HUNTING BEAR WAITED FOR HOLOU'S RETURN FOR SOME TIME, BUT WHEN IT REALIZED SHE WOULD NOT, IT SCARRED THE FOREST WITH ITS CLAWS AS PROOF OF ITS CONQUEST AND LEFT.

WHERE DID IT GO NEXT?

GOOO (ROOAAAR)

AND THIS "BEAR"...

BUT I WAS ALWAYS TOO TERRIFIED TO LISTEN TO THAT PART OF THE STORY...

...A BATTLE WITH THE GREAT SEA SERPENT TEUPEROVAN AWAITED.

WHEN THE MOON-HUNTING BEAR HAD KILLED ALL THE SPIRITS OF THE NORTH-LANDS...

GOOOOOO (WHOOOOM)

HOWEVER... AFTER THAT, THERE ARE NO MORE TALES...

DO (THUD)

DO

.....

WE'LL REST A WHILE.

OUR FLIGHT WOULD BE FOR NAUGHT IF YOU DIE ON THE WAY.

WE'VE COME FAR ENOUGH THAT IT WOULD TAKE A HORSE SOME TIME TO CATCH UP

TSUWA (WHUFF)

LET'S SLEEP A BIT.

WE CAN'T RISK A FIRE, BUT IT'S QUITE WARM NEXT TO YOU.

GATA

GATA (SHIVER)

SO WARM...

ARE YOU TRULY... A GOD?

HOLO...

SPICE & WOLF

mmm

I SUDDENLY FEEL LIKE A MOTHER...

HOLO...

ARE YOU REALLY... A GOD?

.....

I AM HOLO, THE WISEWOLF OF YOITSU.

BUT LONG... HAVE I BEEN CALLED A GOD.

I DWELL WITHIN THE WHEAT...

...AND I CAN TAKE THE FORM OF A WOLF...

...OR A HUMAN.

HUMANS WORSHIP ME...

...AS THE GOD OF THE BOUNTIFUL HARVEST.

AND I...

...AM ABLE TO RESPOND TO THEIR PRAYERS.

...THE BOUNTIFUL HARVEST...

DOES THAT MEAN—

THE QUESTION YOU WOULD ASK...

...IT SHOULD NOT BE ASKED OF ME.

I'VE SEEN THAT STANDARD BEFORE.

THOSE LONG STICKS THE MEN AROUND THE WAGONS ARE HOLDING— SPEARS SURELY.

THOSE ARE ALL THE RIENDOTT COMPANY'S WAGONS...

THERE ARE SO MANY.

WELL, THEY'RE RETURNING ALL THE WHEAT FROM TEREO, SO...

THE VILLAGE'S INDEPENDENCE IS IN DANGER.

GARA

GARA

GARA CLATTER

COMING WITH SUCH FORCE OF ARMS MEANS THEY'RE TRYING TO PRESS FOR AN IMMEDIATE ANSWER.

HM?

SAY, MR. LAWRENCE ...

ASK HER WHAT?

COULD WE NOT ASK YOUR...UM... THE GODDESS THAT CARRIED US HERE?

GARI (SCRATCH)

TO KILL THEM...

SUPPOSE SHE DID AGREE TO SUCH A REQUEST. IT WOULD CERTAINLY BE DONE.

BA (WHAP)

110

PAKI (SNAP)

I SUPPOSE.

BUT THEN ENBERCH WOULD SIMPLY SEND AN ARMY TO TEREO.

AND WE CAN'T FIGHT EVERY ARMY THEY SEND.

SO WHAT SHALL WE DO NEXT?

MISS ELSA...

I AM PLANNING TO MAKE FOR A TOWN NAMED KUMERSUN FIRST.

IF WE CAN MAKE IT THERE, THERE'S A TRADING HOUSE I'M INVOLVED WITH, AND OUR LIVES WILL NO LONGER BE IN DANGER.

ARE YOU FEELING ALL RIGHT?

YES ...

YOU SHOULD THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU WANT TO DO. WE'VE A CONNECTION, YOU AND I— I'LL DO WHAT I CAN TO HELP.

GOTO

GOTO (CLOP)

GOTO

!

ISN'T THAT GREAT, ELSA?

I SEE.

AFTER THAT, THE FOUR OF US WILL FIGURE OUT WHAT TO DO.

LOOKS LIKE A HIGH-RANKING CLERGY MEMBER... I SEE.

THAT'S BISHOP VAN'S...

GARA (RATTLE)

GARA

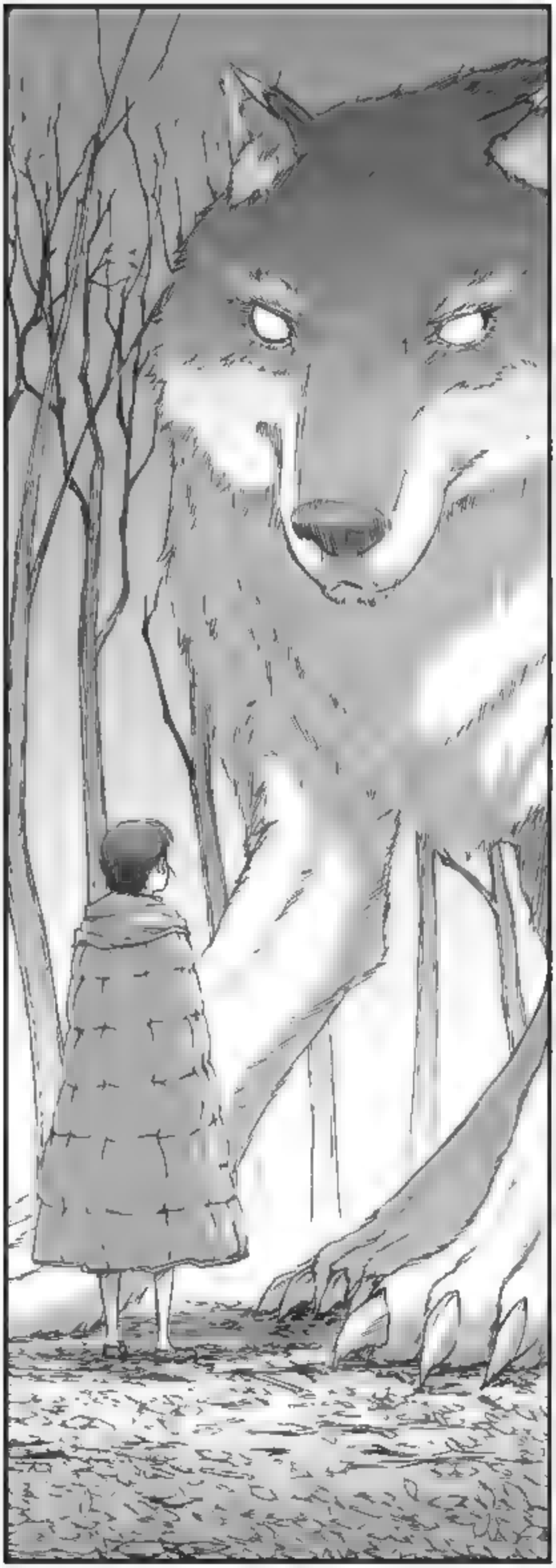
THEY WOULD CLAIM THE ABSENCE OF VICTIMS IN TEREO WAS PROOF THAT THE VILLAGE WAS BEING PROTECTED BY EVIL SPIRITS AND THAT ALL THE VILLAGERS WERE GUILTY OF HERESY.

BUT IF THE HELLFIRE HAD BEEN THERE ALL ALONG, THERE SHOULD HAVE BEEN SIMILAR DEATHS IN TEREO.

RIDELIUS'S HELLFIRE HAD BEEN MIXED IN WITH TEREO'S WHEAT HARVEST, AND A CITIZEN OF ENBERCH HAD DIED FROM IT.

ELSA..

LET'S RETURN TO HOLO.



WE'LL GO A BIT FARTHER, THEN TAKE BREAKFAST.

ELSA?

...I'M SORRY, MR. LAWRENCE.

I'M FATHER FRANZ'S... SUCCESSOR...

OH, INDEED?

I'M RETURNING TO THE VILLAGE.

WHA—!?

...OF GOING BACK TO THE VILLAGE !?

WHAT'S THE POINT...

NU

BA (FWIP)

PEKO (BOW)

GASHI (GRAB)

WHY!?

I MUST!

EVAN, YOU RUN.

BE A FINE MERCHANT.

MR. L- LAWRENCE...

I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR THE VILLAGE CHURCH.

I CANNOT ABANDON THE VILLAGERS.

IT SEEMS SHE WANTS YOU TO BE A FINE MERCHANT.

—!

YOU SAID YOU WANTED TO BECOME A MERCHANT, DIDN'T YOU?

DON'T YOU CARE WHAT HAPPENS TO ELSA!?

A MERCHANT MUST BE ABLE TO LOGICALLY WEIGH GAIN AGAINST LOSS.

BASHI (THWAP)

GIR. (GRIT)

EVAN...

ELSA, LET'S GO!

FUUU (SIIIGH)

SO, WHAT SHALL WE—

VII

DOLI (THOK)

!?

!

WAS I WRONG?

MEKI

MEKI

MEKI (CRIK)

DON (THUD)

WAS I WRONG?

WHO... WHO CAN JUDGE SUCH A THING?

KOFF

KOFF!

IF YOU FIGHT FOR YOUR HOME, EVEN AGAINST HOPELESS ODDS...

GUGU (STRAIN)

GHGH

I CANNOT. STILL, I...

I...

...AT LEAST YOU'LL HAVE NO REGRETS.

BUWA (LOOM)

MY CLAWS CAN CRUSH BOULDERS. I CAN DEFEAT ANY NUMBER OF HUMANS.

AS I WELL KNOW.

SO... COULD I HAVE MATCHED THE MOON-HUNTING BEAR?

NONE IN YOITSU CAN BEST ME.

NOT HUMAN OR WOLF.

SURELY NOT.

スリ
SURI (RUB)

BUT YOU WOULD'VE ADDED ONE MORE GREAT BATTLE TO THE STORIES IN FATHER FRANZ'S BOOKS.

スリ
SURI

WOULD THAT HAVE BEEN BETTER? I'M SURE YOUR FELLOW WOLVES WOULD HAVE FOUGHT ALONGSIDE YOU.

BUT NONE WOULD HAVE SURVIVED.

YOU COULD NOT HAVE KNOWN WHEN DISASTER CAME TO YOITSU.

ALL ELSE IS HYPOTHETICAL.

NO?

...I KNOW.

THAT MUCH...

GUWA (WHFFF)

HI, (BUMP)

HA (GASP)

はぁ、

DEAR LORD... I THANK YOU.

INDEED, THE WAY THOSE TWO SIMPLY EXISTED IN THAT MOMENT... SURELY...

THE FORM OF GOD DOESN'T HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH PHYSICAL FEATURES...

I FEEL LIKE I UNDERSTAND NOW, WHAT FATHER WAS TRYING TO TELL ME...

...WE CAN TAKE YOU NEAR THE VILLAGE, BUT...

MOGU

MOGU

MOGU CMUNCH)

MY APOLOGIES.

DOK!

DOK. (BADUMP)

FOR KILLING ME.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

WHAT EXCUSE WERE YOU GOING TO GIVE ELSA AND EVAN IF THEY'D RETURNED?

SO, THEN.

I'D HAVE NO ABILITY TO COMPLAIN, BEING DEAD.

HMPH!

WERE I A HUMAN FEMALE, YOU'D HAVE NO CAUSE TO COMPLAIN IF I KILLED YOU.

WHAT DO YOU WISH TO DO?

CAN WE NOT DO SOMETHING FOR THEM?

THAT'S WHAT I SHOULD ASK YOU.

BUT THIS VILLAGE MIGHT YET BE.

YOITSU CAN NO LONGER BE SAVED.

I AM NOT A SIMPLE WOLF.

I'M A SIMPLE TRAVELING MERCHANT.

HEY, HEY...

I'VE THOUGHT OF THAT.

IF THERE IS POISON WHEAT MIXED IN WITH THE GOOD WHEAT...

...I CAN STILL TELL THE DIFFERENCE.

I DON'T THINK WE CAN MAKE THEM TRUST US.

BUT IT'S DIFFICULT.

.....?

SHORT OF A MIRACLE, ANYWAY...

THAT'S IT! A MIRACLE!

HMPH!

Special Thanks!!

MR. OKAMOTO ITTOUHEI, MR. TENTSU TOI, MR. YAKKUN, MR. N-TA, MR. YUU, MR. A.

I truly admire how well you've used the strengths of the manga form in this version of the story. It's all unknown territory from here! As a reader, I can't wait to see more!

支倉凍砂
Isuna Hasekura

SPICE & WOLF

Congratulations on Volume 7! I'm really impressed by how you captured Elsa's charm, just like you did with Norah. Each volume is a learning experience for me, and as I grind my teeth from the happiness of being able to be in this position, I'll be cheering you on!

Jyuu Ayakura

SPICE & WOLF 7

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OOKAMI TO KOUSHINRYOU Vol. 7
©Isuna Hasekura/Keito Koume 2012
Edited by ASCII MEDIA WORKS
First published in Japan in 2012 by
KADOKAWA CORPORATION, Tokyo.
English translation rights arranged with
KADOKAWA CORPORATION, Tokyo,
through Tuttle-Mori Agency, Inc., Tokyo.

Translation © 2012 by Hachette Book Group

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Yen Press
Hachette Book Group
1290 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10104

www.HachetteBookGroup.com
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First Yen Press ebook Edition: March 2016

ebook ISBN: 978-0-316-31833-4

App ISBN: 978-0-316-36203-0